

**RG – 50.226.0027**

**Interview with Yuri Rakhman**

01.01.00.

I was born in Vinnitsa in 1928. My father was a builder. There were two children in our family, my younger brother and me.

01.02.14.

Before the war I finished 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Ukrainian school. When the war began our family tried to evacuate but we could not do it because after July 20, 1941, the Germans were in Vinnitsa.

01.04.28.

At the end of August 1941, the Germans made their first pogrom in Vinnitsa. That day many young people were killed because was a special purpose of the Germans to kill as many young men as was possible.

01.07.00.

The next Saturday after the pogrom the Germans entered our street and began to kill men again. My father and I escaped but my brother was taken by the Germans and killed. Next Saturday my mother and grandmother were taken by the Germans and I never saw them again. After that horrible day, my father and I left the village. We did not know where to go but we understood that we had to go the opposite direction of the village.

01.12.00.

We went toward village Staryi Gorod because people gave advice to us to stay there, meaning that the Germans did not know yet that there were Jews there. One woman from the village gave shelter to my father and me in her house and we lived with her until April 16, 1942. My father and I worked in the village.

01.13.00.

On April 16, 1942 the Germans ordered all Jews from the local villages to gather together in a special place. The Germans had a plan to organize a Jewish ghetto. Also on that day, April 16, some Jewish men were selected for jobs and taken to two different places. The group in which my father and I were selected was taken to Vinnitsa, and the other one was taken to Zhitomir. There were organized two work camps in Vinnitsa and in Zhitomir, one camp in each town.

01.18.00.

When we approached the camp we discovered that there already were three hundred Polish Jews and they were all workers with different professions. There were shoemakers, painters, builders and other workers. Together with them we began to live and work for the Germans. Our life in the camp was very hard. The Germans hurt us all the time and also they killed people from the camp in cases if they were sick and could not work.

01.31.20.

My father and I understood that after finishing our job the Germans would not need us any longer and they would kill us for sure. So my father and his friend decided to escape from the camp. Fortunately, the place where we worked was not guarded very well and my father, with his friend and me, escaped from the camp. We went to father's friend's house and we lived there with his family for a few months; they hid us.

01.33.60.

There were a lot of jobs in the ghetto of Vinnica. After we escaped from the camp my father and I began to work in the ghetto as workers. There were a few ghettos in Vinnica. Our life inside the ghetto was much better than life in the camp because the Germans hurt us less in the ghetto than in the camp and we had more food in the ghetto.

02.07.00.

In March 1943, the Germans took old people from the ghetto and killed them. My father understood that the next turn would be ours. So we decided to escape from the ghetto.

02.12.00.

Soon my father and I left the ghetto and we went toward the village Tuit'ki. There we got a shelter from our friends but we were not there for a long time, we left Tuit'ki very soon after we discovered that the place was dangerous for us to stay.

02.16.00.

After we left Tuit'ki my father and I continued our route. One old man from the village Voroshilovka helped us and we crossed the river with his friend.

02.26.00.

We entered the village Krasnoe. There we lived in the Jewish collective farm. One day many Jews including me were taken by the police to Zhmerinka. None of us knew what to expect and we were scared. The Germans took us to the village Tree Khatki that was located next to Nikolaev. There the Germans organized a camp and we worked there building and repairing a railway station. We worked many hours almost without rest. The Germans forced us to do the job in a hurry because they were retreating from the Red Army.

03.05.00.

One day my father, a few of our friends and I escaped from the camp by train. We went to Ghmerinka by train and then we continued our route on foot. One woman gave shelter to us and we lived in her house for a few months.

03.20.00.

In winter 1944, the village where we lived was freed. My father and I returned to Vinnica. There we discovered that there was another family in our apartment and they did not want to leave our own place. But my father got permission from local authorities to live in any apartment we could find free and soon we found a place to live in the same building.

03.24.00.

Soon after returning to Vinnica I began to study in vocational school and I finished it.

In 1946 I married and I have two daughters.